



COPING WITH OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: AN EMPIRICAL SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a natural Phenomenon. We experience many difficulties, challenges and changes throughout the life. Any kind of interruption to make adjustment with these problems and challenges leads to encounter with stressful situations or events. Teacher educators work like a productive force to produce good and effective teachers and also carrying the responsibilities to inculcate teaching skills and competences among pre-service teachers. Sometime level of stress may consider beneficial or harmful which affect an individual at personal and professional front both. Selection of appropriate coping strategy may influence the vulnerability of distress caused by occupational stress. Thus, stress and coping behavior is considered as an important key component for discussion. The study was conducted on teacher educators to study the level of stress and to identify the coping strategies used by them to minimize the level of stress. Teacher's occupational stress scale by S. Jamal and A. Raheem and self-developed coping strategies Scale were used to collect data from the sample of 30 teacher educators. The study is delimited to teacher training Institution located in Delhi and NCR and teacher educators of B.Ed. Programme only. Descriptive survey research method has been adopted and descriptive analysis through various statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Findings of the study revealed that most of the teacher educators encounter with moderate level of stress and majority of respondents are using sharing strategies as best coping strategy to deal with stressful situation.

Key Words: Occupational Stress, Coping Strategies, Teacher Educators, Coping behavior.

INTRODUCTION:

Teachers who work like a productive force to produce good, civilized and skilled citizens for the country. Development of nation depends upon on quality of education and quality of education depends on quality of teachers. Teacher training institutions are carrying direct responsibility to produce good and effective teachers. Here, teacher educators play vital role to produce good and effective teachers. The role of teacher educators extends beyond classroom teaching. They are bearing the responsibilities to inculcate moral and human values along with teaching qualities, skills and competencies among pre- service teachers to face the challenges of modern education system. Educational activities have become more demanding and challenging in this modern and technological world. We expect more from the teachers. An institution expects wide varieties of roles from teacher educators to support and transact innovative practices emerged in the field of teacher education. To justify their role as philosopher, guide, facilitator, researcher, curriculum developer, professional practitioner, etc. they come across with many stressful events contributed to makes them victim of stress which may adversely affects their teaching and professional behavior as well. Occupational stress results in discouragement, dissatisfaction, fatigue and anger contribute to reduce the efficiency of teachers and deterioration of standard of education. Coping mechanism is the cognitive process to deal with stressful events in life. The selection of appropriate coping strategies is necessary to diminish the amount of stress.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1) To study the level of occupational stress among teacher educators.
- 2) To identify various coping strategies used by the teacher educators to diminish the level of stress.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Education as an integral part of life is perceived as widespread reality. It is normally well organized or regulated through formal agencies of education like schools and other educational institutions. As we know quality of education is maintained by quality of teachers. Teacher educators and teacher training institutions are carrying the direct responsibility to provide good and effective teachers. As many research evidently proved a positive relation between occupational stress with teacher effectiveness and job performance. Thus, it seems to be reasonably significant to study about the level of occupational stress and to identify some effective coping strategies to decrease the level of occupational stress among teacher educators. Thus, this study will be helpful for the teacher educators who have to confront stressful situations at workplace but feel helpless to cope with the situation which result in quitting the job or change the profession. It would also be helpful for administrators and policy makers to take effective decision to control the environmental variables to diminish the level of occupational stress among teacher educators. It would be significant from the points of view of individuals as well as collective, organizational and professional perspective.

METHODOLOGY:

Descriptive survey research method has been adopted and descriptive analysis through various statistical techniques was used to analyse the data. The target

population of present study comprises all teacher training institutions located in Delhi and NCR and all teacher educators working in teacher training institution. Sample of the study comprises total 30 teachers selected through simple random sampling. Teacher's Occupational Stress Scale by S. Jamal & A. Raheem and Self-develop Coping Strategies Scale were used to collect the data. Descriptive analysis of the collected data was done, by using some statistical techniques like Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation and frequency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Objective No.1 To study the level of occupational stress among teacher educators.

Level and extent of occupational stress are presented along with the Mean, SD of the distribution of scores of the study sample (N = 30) presented in table:1

Table 1: Level of occupational stress among teacher educators.

Variable	Mean	SD	Distribution of score	Extent	Level	Percentage
Occupational Stress	83	10	Below Average	56-72	Low Stress	14%
			Between M \pm 1 SD	73-93	Moderate Stress	80%
			Above Average	94-97	High Stress	6%

Table 1: shows that only 14% of teachers are falling within the range of low level of occupational stress, whereas 80% teachers are perceiving moderate level of occupational stress. However, 6% teachers are falling under the range of above average which shows that they perceived high level of occupational stress at workplace. The reason may be individual perception to perceive similar situation in different ways. Some other environmental variables like number of students, inter and intra relationships, school environment, facilities available etc. may be some possible reasons also.

Objective No- 2 To identify various coping strategies used by the teacher educators to diminish the level of stress.

Frequency distribution of each coping strategies used by teacher educators is computed to study the usage of particular coping strategies to diminish the level of stress presented in table 2.

Table 2: Coping strategies used by the teacher educators

Sr. No	Coping Strategies	Percentage
1	Problem Solving Strategies	11.48%
2	Relaxation Strategies	15.65%
3	Avoidance Strategies	12.59%
4	Prompt Action Strategies	9.88%
5	Reappraisal Strategies	10.63%
6	Maladaptive Strategies,	7.16%
7	Reconstructive Strategies	6.31%
8	Sharing Strategies	26.30%

Table:2 shows majority of the respondents (26.30%) are using sharing strategies. The least followed coping strategies are reconstructive strategies (6.31%). However, (15.65%) of the respondents using relaxation strategies, (12.59%) using avoidance strategies, (9.88%) using prompt action strategies, (10.63%) using reappraisal strategies, (7.16%) using maladaptive strategies, (11.48%) using problem solving strategies. The reason may be sharing the problem with most trustworthy person in a social group like peer, friends and colleagues etc. provides us the solution of the problem with more trust and emotional support.

Educational Implications:

All over the world the educationist emphasises that quality of teachers' educators is most concern with quality teachers. In this regard, the findings of the present study provide empirical evidences about occupational stress and associated coping strategies, which may have strong and practical implications in existing educational setup. It is helpful for school organization to understand the influence of stress on teacher effectiveness and to explore probable causes of stress. Thus, the necessary efforts can be made by the organization and management to minimize the level of stress and to provide healthy and progressive environment. Teacher training institutions must conduct stress management programs followed by open house discussion and interaction among the members of the group to deal with any stressful situation at workplace.

CONCLUSION:

Thus, it may be concluded that most of the teacher educators perceived moderate level of stress. It may negatively influence their teaching and overall performance at workplace. Most of the educators are using sharing strategies to cope with stress. Thus, there is need to provide co-operative, friendly and democratic environment at workplace.

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